



LUSAKA OAKTREE SCHOOL MODEL UNITED NATIONS
LOTSMUN 2026

Architects of Accountability • Redefining Power, Peace and Progress

CHAIR GUIDE

Dais Handbook

For committee chairs and dais members: running fair, focused debate
and recognising outstanding delegates

Message from the Secretary General

Dear Chairs,

Thank you for accepting one of the most important roles at LOTSMUN 2026.

This year, under the theme “Architects of Accountability: Redefining Power, Peace and Progress,” we ask delegates to consider not only how decisions are made but who is responsible for them and who is affected by them. That question applies to you as well. As chair, you hold the gavel, and you are accountable for making sure that every delegate in your room is heard, treated fairly and given a real chance to learn.

Many of our delegates will be speaking in a Model United Nations committee for the first time. Some will be nervous and some will be very confident. The tone you set in the first ten minutes will shape how everyone behaves for the rest of the conference. Be firm about the rules, but warm towards the people. Correct mistakes calmly, encourage quieter voices and never let a delegate feel embarrassed for trying.

You will also be our eyes and ears for LOTSMUN’s four special awards: Best Delegate, Honourable Mention, Best Dressed and Most Promising. Please judge on evidence, not impressions, and remember that these awards celebrate preparation, diplomacy and growth rather than volume or popularity.

This guide is not meant to script your every move. It gives you the structure, the rules of thumb and the tools to run your committee with confidence, and it trusts you to use your judgement when something unexpected happens.

I look forward to seeing the debates you guide.

Malenji Arthur Jonah

Secretary General, LOTSMUN 2026

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1. Your Role as Chair

1.1 What does a chair do?

The chair opens and closes sessions, recognises speakers, rules on points and motions, keeps time and makes sure the committee makes progress. The UN's own guidance describes the chair's influence in four ways: **allowing things to happen** (a committee cannot undertake any formal activity unless the chair is presiding), **facilitating work** (allowing adequate time for debate and informal consultation and resolving procedural issues), **indirect influence** (for example inviting a delegate to speak or suggesting informal consultations) and, as a last resort, **personal initiative** (acting as an intermediary or broker to resolve a disagreement).¹

At LOTSMUN, your job has one more dimension: you are the delegates' **guide and teacher**. Delegates range from Primary to Upper Secondary level, and your committee may be a delegate's first ever.

1.2 LOTSMUN at a glance

Item	What to know
Conference theme	Architects of Accountability: Redefining Power, Peace and Progress.
Delegates represent	Countries. Ask them to speak as their country would.
Conference day	Saturday, 10 October 2026, at Lusaka Oaktree School. Full programme in Section 2.
Opening speeches	1 minute 20 seconds (80 seconds) per delegate.
Special awards	Best Delegate, Honourable Mention, Best Dressed and Most Promising.
Levels	Primary, Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary committees, each with its own study guide.

¹ United Nations. The Chair's activities in guiding the work of a committee (Model UN). <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/chairmans-activities-guiding-work-committee>

1.3 Who is on the dais?

Dais teams differ by committee size. A typical division of work looks like this:

Role	Main duties
Chair	Presides over debate, rules on procedure, sets the pace and represents the committee's standards.
Vice-Chair or co-chair	Shares the gavel, keeps the speakers' list and time, and observes delegates for awards.
Rapporteur or secretary (if any)	Records attendance, motions and votes, collects notes and passes messages.
All dais members	Circulate during caucuses, answer questions, score delegates and support each other publicly. Never contradict a co-chair in front of delegates. ²

1.4 The qualities of a good chair

- **Know your material.** Understand the topic better than any delegate so that you can tell strong ideas from weak ones and guide the merging of draft resolutions.³
- **Rule with respect.** Build authority through knowledge and demeanour, not through the gavel or a raised voice. If you make a mistake, say "The Chair stands corrected."^{4,5}
- **Be approachable.** Circulate during caucuses and invite questions, especially from quiet or nervous delegates.⁶
- **Be fair.** Track who has spoken and rotate recognition so that speaking opportunities are shared equitably.⁷
- **Keep the energy up.** Debate stays lively when the chair does. Rest, eat and drink water between sessions.⁸

² MUNISH. The Model United Nations Chairing Guide. https://www.munish.nl/dl/mun_official/The_Model_United_Nations_Chairing_Guide.pdf

³ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair. <https://bestdelegate.com/fifteen-tips-to-being-a-good-committee-chair/>

⁴ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

⁵ MUNISH. The Model United Nations Chairing Guide... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

⁶ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

⁷ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

⁸ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

2. The Conference Programme

LOTSMUN 2026 takes place on **Saturday, 10 October 2026** at **Lusaka Oaktree School**. It is one long day, so your committee has to use its time well. The table shows the official programme and what each part means for the dais.

2.1 The day at a glance

Time	Programme	What it means for you as chair
07:00–07:45	Delegate check-in and registration	Arrive early. Meet your dais, collect your materials and greet delegates warmly. Best Dressed starts here, so notice how delegates arrive.
08:00–08:20	Opening ceremony	Be in place with your delegates. Help younger delegates settle.
08:20–08:30	Secretary-General's speech	Listen with your committee. Model good audience behaviour.
08:30–08:45	Guest of Honour's address and official opening	Same as above. Stay quiet and attentive.
08:45–09:00	Official photographs and committee breakouts	Guide delegates to your room. Have placards, attendance sheet and speakers' list ready so that you can start at 09:00.
09:00–10:30	Committee Session 1 (90 minutes)	Roll call, agenda and opening speeches (1 minute 20 seconds each). Begin debate.
10:30–11:00	Break	Delegates rest. Write award notes, hold a two-minute dais debrief and plan Session 2.
11:00–12:30	Committee Session 2 (90 minutes)	Main debate and caucuses. Help delegates form blocs and start working papers.
12:30–13:30	Lunch	Eat and rest. Update award notes. Check that working papers are on track.
13:30–16:00	Committee Session 3 (150 minutes)	Draft resolutions, amendments and voting. This is the longest session, so plan a short stretch break.
16:00–16:45	General Assembly	Committee work ends. Confirm with the Secretariat what chairs do here.
16:45–17:30	Closing ceremony	Support your delegates. Confirm with the Secretariat when awards are announced.
17:30–18:00	Social	Congratulate and thank your delegates.

2.2 Planning your committee time

Your committee has **330 minutes** of session time in total: 90 + 90 + 150. The 15 minutes before Session 1 begins are for photographs and moving to your room, so be ready to start on time. A suggested plan:

Session	Time available	Suggested focus
Session 1	90 minutes	Roll call and agenda (about 10 minutes), then opening speeches (see the table in Section 4.2), then the first moderated caucus on the main sub-topics.
Session 2	90 minutes	Alternate moderated and unmoderated caucuses. Encourage blocs, and have working papers started by the end of the session.
Session 3	150 minutes	Finish and submit draft resolutions in the first hour. Then amendments, and voting with at least 30 minutes kept in hand for it. Close the committee on time for the General Assembly at 16:00.

Why the clock matters

With **20 delegates**, opening speeches take about **30 minutes**, one third of Session 1. With **30 delegates** they take about **45 minutes**, half of it. Decide in advance how you will use the rest.

2.3 Awards across the day

The programme has three committee sessions, so you have three chances to see each delegate. Use the breaks to turn your observations into notes.

- **Before Session 1:** note dress and first impressions at check-in (for Best Dressed).
- **After each session:** write short award notes and complete a scorecard (Appendix C) for your strongest delegates.
- **During Session 3:** watch for growth and leadership in drafting and voting (Most Promising and Best Delegate).
- **At the end of Session 3:** hold your dais meeting, compare scorecards and decide your recommendations.

3. Before the Conference

3.1 Prepare your substance

A calm chair is a prepared chair. Preparation gives you authority before debate begins.⁹ Before the conference:

1. **Read your committee's study guide** from start to finish, including the case studies, definitions and country table.
2. **Do your own extra research** on the topic, so that you can ask good follow-up questions.
3. **Study the delegate list.** Note which countries are present, what blocs they may form and which delegates are new.
4. **Make a one-page cheat sheet:** the rules of procedure in order, the speaking time limits, and likely problems with your planned response.¹⁰
5. **Pack your materials:** gavel, timer, country placards, attendance sheet, printed speakers' list and scorecards (Appendices B and C), water and the Secretariat's contact details.
6. **Prepare a few intervention questions** to keep debate moving, such as "How would this clause be funded?" or "Who would check that this happens?"

3.2 Meet your dais

Hold a dais meeting before day one. Agree who does what, how you will signal each other, how you will handle disagreement in private and who is responsible for scoring. Also hold a **calibration discussion** on the awards, so that all chairs apply the same standards (see Section 7).¹¹

3.3 Set the tone

Delegates take their cue from the dais's first moments. A warm welcome at registration and a friendly, flexible opening help nervous delegates settle, while excessive strictness can discourage participation.¹² At the same time, correct the first violations calmly and immediately so that everyone knows the standard.¹³ Conference guides differ on starting strict or flexible. For LOTSMUN, and especially younger committees, the safest approach is **warm, clear and consistent**.¹⁴

What this means for you

Smile, and explain procedure in plain words. Firm about the rules, kind to the person: **rule firmly, speak softly**.¹⁵

⁹ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel. <https://blog.modeldiplomat.com/mun-chair-guide>

¹⁰ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹¹ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹² Best Delegate. 5 things Model UN delegates want chairs to know. <https://bestdelegate.com/5-things-model-un-delegates-want-chairs-to-know/>

¹³ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹⁴ MUNISH. The Model United Nations Chairing Guide... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹⁵ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

4. Running the Committee

4.1 The flow of committee

Most sessions move through the same stages. Use the table as your map.

Stage	What happens	Your job as chair
1. Roll call	Delegates are marked present, or present and voting.	Take attendance, announce the quorum (if any) and welcome the committee.
2. Set the agenda	The committee confirms it will debate the topic.	Read the topic aloud and take any agenda motions.
3. Opening speeches	Each delegate gives a 1 minute 20 second speech on their country's position.	Keep time, note the substance of each speech and invite every delegate to speak.
4. Formal and informal debate	Speakers' list, moderated and unmoderated caucuses.	Rule on motions, balance speakers and reset objectives after each caucus.
5. Drafting	Delegates write working papers and draft resolutions.	Check format, help merge similar papers and return weak drafts with feedback.
6. Amendments and voting	The committee refines and votes on draft resolutions.	Explain voting procedure, keep order and record the results.
7. Closing	The committee reviews outcomes and closes.	Thank delegates, give feedback and complete award recommendations.

4.2 Opening speeches: 1 minute 20 seconds

Each opening speech lasts **1 minute 20 seconds (80 seconds)**. Plan your session around that fixed time.

With about 10 seconds for the transition between speakers, the opening round takes roughly:

Delegates in committee	Approximate time for opening speeches	Suggestion
15	about 23 minutes	Comfortable in one block.
20	about 30 minutes	Comfortable in one block.
30	about 45 minutes	Consider a short break in the middle.
40	about 60 minutes	Plan the schedule carefully with the Secretariat.

- **Timekeeping tip:** agree a signal with your vice-chair, for example a raised hand at 1:00 (20 seconds left) and a light tap of the gavel at 1:20.
- Note one or two key points from each speech and how the delegate delivered them. These notes are the starting point for awards.

4.3 The speakers' list and fair recognition

Keep a written speakers' list and a tally of who has spoken. When several delegates are raising placards, rotate recognition so that quieter delegates and delegates from every region and bloc get a turn.¹⁶ Do not always call the delegate who raises a placard first or highest. Invite a quiet delegate by name in a kind tone, and give nervous delegates a chance to speak in an informal caucus if the formal setting is too daunting.^{17,18}

4.4 Moderated and unmoderated caucuses

Type	Use it when
Moderated caucus	You need focus on one sub-topic and want every voice to be heard in short speeches. Ask for the purpose, total time and speaking time.
Unmoderated caucus	Delegates need to negotiate, form blocs or write. Delegates often prefer them because they allow quick and easy expression, so give them enough time. ¹⁹

After every caucus, **reset the objective:** summarise the state of play in one or two sentences, name a point of disagreement and call on new voices.²⁰ Match the caucus type to what the room needs: moderated for focus, unmoderated for drafting.²¹

4.5 Working papers, draft resolutions and amendments

- **Check the format** against the Secretariat's instructions, and return poorly formatted drafts with specific feedback.²²
- **Take amendments in order**, broad policy changes before minor wording changes, and avoid letting the room argue over every word at once.²³
- **Watch for pre-written resolutions and plagiarism.** Address them tactfully and fairly.²⁴

¹⁶ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹⁷ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹⁸ Best Delegate. 5 things Model UN delegates want chairs to know... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

¹⁹ Best Delegate. 5 things Model UN delegates want chairs to know... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

²⁰ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

²¹ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

²² Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

²³ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

²⁴ Best Delegate. 15 tips to being a good committee chair... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

4.6 Voting and closing

Close debate when substantive disagreement is exhausted. Explain the voting procedure before you begin, and count votes carefully with your co-chair.²⁵ After voting, thank delegates, name what the committee achieved and give a brief word on what to work on next.



²⁵ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

5. Rules of Procedure Quick Reference

The table below shows the points and motions that most MUN conferences use. **LOTSMUN's Rules of Procedure from the Secretariat take priority.** Adapt the language for younger committees, and explain each rule the first time it is used.

5.1 Points

Point	Meaning and how to respond
Point of Personal Privilege	A delegate has a comfort or audibility problem, such as a noisy room. Address it at once.
Point of Order	A delegate believes a rule has been broken. Rule on it promptly and briefly.
Point of Parliamentary Inquiry	A question about the rules. Answer clearly, without lecturing.
Point of Information	A question to a speaker or to the chair, if the speaker yields to questions.

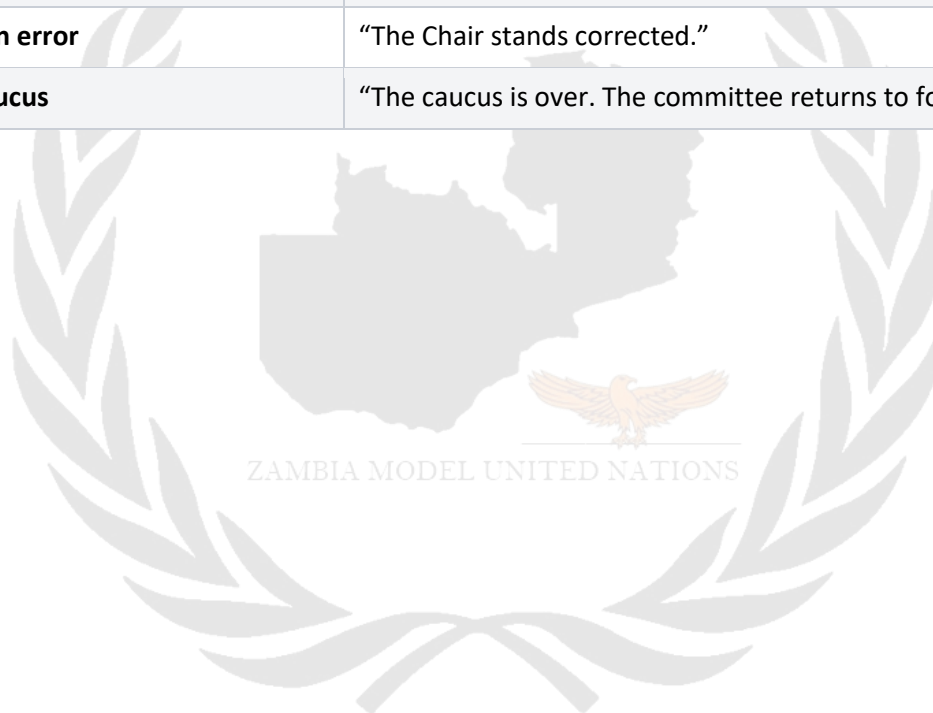
5.2 Motions (from most to least disruptive)

Motion	What it does
Motion to adjourn or suspend the session	Ends the meeting or takes a break.
Motion for an unmoderated caucus	Delegates leave formal debate to negotiate and draft.
Motion for a moderated caucus	Focused debate with a set topic, total time and speaking time.
Motion to extend debate or a caucus	Adds time to the current activity.
Motion to introduce a draft resolution or amendment	Puts written work on the floor.
Motion to close debate or move to the previous question	Ends debate and moves to voting.

Prefer motions that move the committee forward, and rule repetitive or delaying motions out of order.

5.3 Phrases every chair should know

Situation	What to say
Opening the session	"The committee will now come to order. Welcome to [committee] at LOTSMUN 2026."
Roll call	"Delegates, please respond with 'present' when your country is called."
Recognising a speaker	"The Chair recognises the delegate of [country], who has one minute and twenty seconds."
Warning about time	"Delegate, you have twenty seconds remaining."
Calling for order	"The committee will please come to order. Thank you."
Ruling on a point	"The point is well taken." or "The point is not in order."
Admitting an error	"The Chair stands corrected."
Closing a caucus	"The caucus is over. The committee returns to formal debate."



6. Managing People and Problems

6.1 Common problems and how to respond

Problem	What to do
One delegate dominates	Thank them, rotate the floor and call new voices. Suggest they help draft with others.
Silent delegates or blocs	Call on them kindly in a moderated caucus, or ask a simple question they can answer from their country's position.
Personal clashes	Pause the exchange, reframe around policy and ask for a written proposal instead of a live rebuttal.
Disruptive behaviour	Correct borderline behaviour privately first, in a neutral tone, and use a public ruling for serious violations. Escalate to the Secretariat if it continues.
Paper or draft written by someone else	Encourage independent writing, ask the delegate to explain the ideas in their own words, and note it for awards.

6.2 Adjusting for each level

Level	How to chair
Primary	Use simple words, demonstrate each procedure and be very encouraging. Keep caucuses short, give each delegate a supportive comment, and focus awards on effort and clear ideas.
Lower Secondary	Explain rules quickly, expect more independent drafting and push for country-specific arguments. Coach gently on speaking clearly and listening to others.
Upper Secondary	Expect fluent procedure and evidence. Ask challenging questions about funding, enforcement and feasibility, and hold delegates to a high standard on diplomacy.

6.3 Safeguarding and wellbeing

- **Treat every delegate with respect.** No teasing, sarcasm or comments about a delegate's appearance, accent, background or country.
- **Keep contact public.** Talk to delegates in the committee room or in open areas, and do not arrange private one-to-one meetings or exchange personal contact details.
- **Watch for distress.** If a delegate seems upset, unwell or overwhelmed, give a short break and inform the Secretariat or the delegate's teacher.
- **Report serious concerns immediately** to the Secretary General or the staff member in charge. Follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

7. LOTSMUN Awards

LOTSMUN has four special awards. As chair, you and your dais recommend delegates from your committee, and the Secretariat confirms the final results. Awards should celebrate **preparation, diplomacy and growth**, and not only confidence or volume.²⁶

7.1 The four awards

Award	What it recognises	Look for
Best Delegate	The delegate who did the best overall job in your committee.	Strong research, clear speeches, active debate, diplomacy and collaboration, useful drafting, and good use of procedure.
Honourable Mention	A delegate whose performance was excellent and close to the best.	The same qualities, shown consistently, with a clear standout moment or contribution.
Best Dressed	The delegate who best met LOTSMUN's dress code with neatness, professionalism and care.	Formal, tidy and appropriate dress for the conference, including traditional or national dress. It is not about expensive clothes.
Most Promising	A delegate, often new to MUN, who shows the greatest potential or growth.	Improvement over the sessions, courage in speaking, willingness to listen and to learn, and clear potential.

²⁶ Best Delegate. Best Delegate, Outstanding Delegate, and Honorable Mentions are outdated: what's next? <https://bestdelegate.com/best-delegate-outstanding-delegate-and-honorable-mentions-are-outdated-whats-next/>

7.2 A suggested scoring rubric

Traditional conference awards look at the same things: speeches, participation, diplomacy, use of procedure and written work.^{27,28} Score Best Delegate and Honourable Mention candidates out of 100, using these **suggested weights**.

Criterion	Points	What good looks like
Research and preparation	20	Accurate knowledge of the topic and country position, with reliable facts.
Speeches and speaking	20	Clear, structured, on time (1 minute 20 seconds for opening speeches), confident and persuasive.
Participation in debate	20	Frequent, relevant, constructive contributions in all debate.
Diplomacy and collaboration	20	Respectful, inclusive, works across delegations and helps others. ²⁹
Drafting and solutions	10	Useful clauses, realistic ideas and willingness to merge and compromise.
Rules of procedure	5	Uses procedure correctly to help the committee, not to obstruct it. ³⁰
Conduct	5	Professional behaviour throughout. Deduct points for yelling, exclusion or disruption. ³¹

Best Dressed and **Most Promising** are judged separately (Section 7.1). Use Appendix C for all four.

7.3 Rules for fair judging

- **Agree the standards before committee begins**, not afterwards, and decide ties together by discussing the evidence.³²
- **Record evidence, not impressions**. After each session write short notes, and score every session so that the final one does not count extra.^{33,34}
- **Value all kinds of contribution** (speeches, negotiation, drafting, conduct, growth), and reward substance over the wish to win. Where you can, give each delegate one strength and one next step.^{35,36}

²⁷ NMUN. Awards criteria. <https://www.nmun.org/awards-criteria.html>

²⁸ MUN Theory (Medium). Theory of Model UN: awarding delegates. <https://medium.com/mun-theory/theory-of-model-un-awarding-delegates-b20a1ce39520>

²⁹ NMUN. Awards criteria... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³⁰ NMUN. Awards criteria... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³¹ NMUN. Awards criteria... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³² Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³³ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³⁴ MUN Theory (Medium). Theory of Model UN: awarding delegates... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³⁵ Model Diplomat. MUN chair guide: mastering committee from gavel to gavel... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

³⁶ Best Delegate. Best Delegate, Outstanding Delegate, and Honorable Mentions are outdated: what's... (See earlier note or bibliography.)

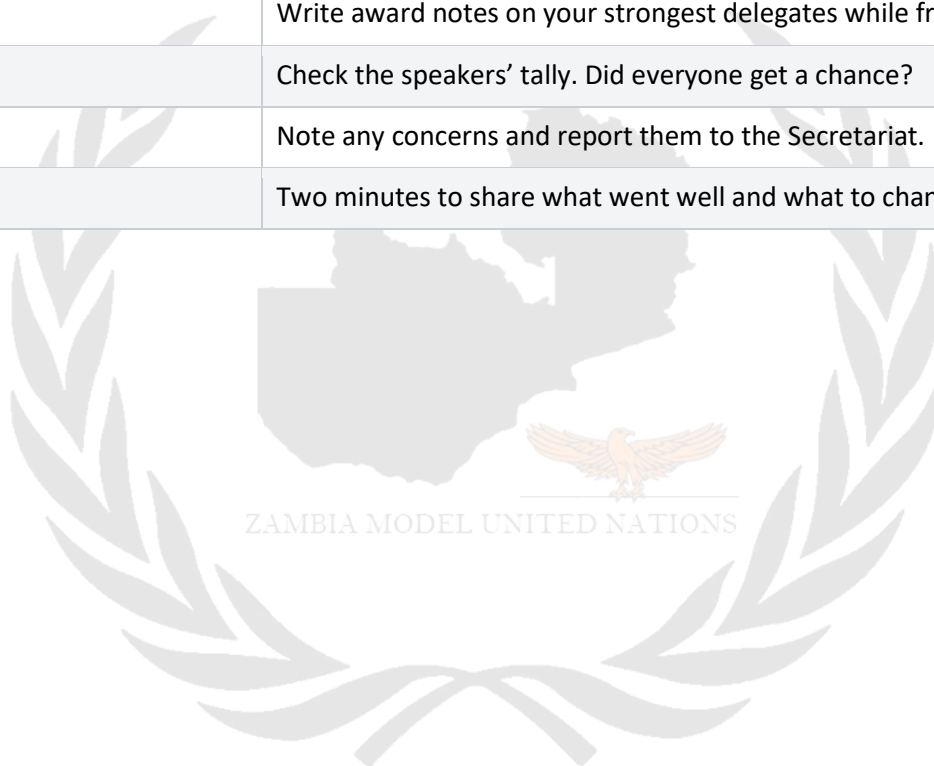
- **Declare conflicts of interest.** Tell the dais and the Secretariat before scoring a friend, relative or schoolmate.



Appendix A: Session Checklist

Before the session	Check
Dais	Roles agreed, scoring sheets ready, timer and gavel at hand.
Room	Placards, attendance sheet and speakers' list ready.
Content	Study guide, Rules of Procedure and cheat sheet to hand.
Welcome	A friendly greeting ready for nervous delegates.

After the session	Check
Notes	Write award notes on your strongest delegates while fresh.
Fairness	Check the speakers' tally. Did everyone get a chance?
Wellbeing	Note any concerns and report them to the Secretariat.
Dais debrief	Two minutes to share what went well and what to change.



Appendix B: Speakers' List Tracker

Print this table and tick each time a delegate speaks. Use the last column to note a strong point.

[illegible]

Appendix C: Awards Scorecard

Use one copy for each strong candidate, per session. Add the sessions together at the dais meeting. Best Dressed and Most Promising can be noted in the last two columns.

Country	Prep (20)	Speech (20)	Debate (20)	Diplo (20)	Draft (10)	Rules (5)	Conduct (5)	Total

Country	Best Dressed notes	Most Promising notes

Guide prepared by:

Malenji Arthur Jonah

Secretary General, LOTSMUN 2026

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